

## Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, undated, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. My darling Alec:

I do think you are behaving shabbily all around, first to break all your promises to me about taking care of yourself, and then not to come down. Of course I wouldn't have let you go home so soon as you did Wednesday if I hadn't supposed you were coming back, and I think you might have told me. As for your sitting up all night to punish you a le Yolande W. I thought of sitting up all tonight but concluded that it would not impress you unless you personally saw my heavy eyes, so will wait until you come. But truly Alec why will you always break your word to your wife at the slightest provocation. Surely in this case you cannot say you were asleep and irresponsible and you know how important it is that you should be regular. I feel as if a shadow had come over my content. I am willing to stay here and look after my children as best as my "weak flesh" will allow my "willing spirit" if you will but be decently careful, but when I hear that you are not I am worried and torn to pieces. As for coming here I am satisfied to have you put it off if you would only behave properly. What are you doing anyway, I cannot hear that you are doing anything useful except read your testimony, and that good will that do. I hear you have not been inside the laboratory yet, that you sleep all day. Alec, Alec do let me see that my letting you go away from me is doing other people good. That you are helping Chester in the laboratory and doing something to add to your fame. I really need you badly here and have not been feeling quite well for some days, and had nightmares every night so that I am frightened being alone, but I did not mind that while I supposed you were working hard but 2 steadily and in good season. Your children need you, their characters are unfolding and they are a puzzle to me, all our lives we may regret that you too absorbed in irregular night work tending — where? to give them the care I cannot. I believe in God, perhaps the reason our boy was taken from us so early was that we have not done our duty by the children

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we have, perhaps we may never have one until we prove that we are able and willing to give our children proper care. Why was our wealth given us if not to give you time to make up to your children what they lose by their Mother's loss. They need to be better cared for now, for by and by they will have to act more for themselves than other more fortunate mothers children. Alec I say that unless you find real and pressing work to do and do it, it is your duty to come back now, My darling don't think I have been scolding you, but "In time of Peace prepare for War" and I am frightened to think where you will be when sickness comes, as come it must sometime if you continue your present irregular life. You did promise me you know you did, that this summer you would live in the country with us and try and establish good habits. Instead of which you send me a basket of fruit. It was almost an insult, what is the good of all this to me unless I know you are doing what you faithfully said you would do. I know it is hard for you, but what is love, if it will not do hard things for loved ones. Please do as I am with my ring and above all your thoughtfulness in getting it for me all by yourself. I would willingly give it up for the truthful record of a month of your life, lived as you promised your wife and for her sake.

I do feel almost frantic at my inability to do anything just now. I feel like taking the train to you, but my children, they are well, but I dread leaving them.

Mabel.

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Why cannot Lewis wake you as you say the servant did at Elgin.

They are all laughing at me here for believing you would keep your promise. They think it a good joke, and oh Alec it hurts. I never dare to say a word to you for you always say I am scolding and so sulk and will not hear, but I cannot bear to have people think you are doing nothing and what can you do if you don't work when others and work. Please, please if you love me work in the daytime and not at night. Alec I am frightened and don't see what we are coming too. You always promised that this summer you would live properly

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and as you did last summer, and every night you sit up you render it harder for you to sleep at night. Alec if you love me be good.

Your loving but distressed wife.

It is so nice being rich, please don't spoil it for me by feeling that perhaps it is a curse instead of a blessing, because if we were poor you would have to work hard and regularly.